



THE UNPREACHED GOSPEL

THE UNPREACHED GOSPEL: WHAT IS THE KINGDOM?

Aloha everyone! I'm Mark if we haven't met and I'm so excited you're here today as we kick off a brand new series.

The Problem

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved," (Romans 10:9 NIV).

My son Judah is going to be five soon. When I was his age I became increasingly worried that my then Buddhist Grandma was not going to go to heaven. So one day I sat her down and said, "Grandma, do you want to go to heaven?" And she said, "Yes". And I said, "If you want to go to heaven, you need to be a Christian. Do you want to become a Christian?" And she said, "How do I do that?" And I said, "Repeat after me." Then I led her in some version of the sinner's prayer and I said, "That's it! You're a Christian!" And I felt a tremendous weight lifted off of my shoulders. My Grandma was going to heaven. Come to find out, she didn't share in my feelings of rejoicing. My Mom later told me that after our interaction my Grandma went up to her and asked, "Is that really all it takes to become a Christian?"

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Is that really all it takes to become a Christian? Is a verbal confession all that is needed to be saved? Like in 'The Office' when Michael Scott is having money problems and has to declare bankruptcy so he stands in front of everyone and yells, "I declare, 'BANKRUPTCY!'" Is that how it works?

OG DISCUSSION QUESTION: *Do you think my Grandma became a genuine Christian in that moment? Why or why not?*

Although we would like to believe it, I think in our heart-of-hearts we know there's more to the gospel than that. But perhaps in our zeal to see people saved, we have preached an incomplete gospel. A couple of weeks ago God spoke to me through the Prophet Jeremiah,

¹⁶ *"This is what the Lord Almighty says:*

"Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.

¹⁷ *They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'The Lord says: You will have peace.' And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts they say, 'No harm will come to you.'*

¹⁸ *But which of them has stood in the council of the Lord to see or to hear His word? Who has listened and heard His word?" (Jeremiah 23:16-18).*